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MEDITATIONS

AND

PRAYERS

FOR

SICK PERSONS.

BY

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Late Dean of *Canterbury*, and *K*
Chaplain in Ordinary to his MAJESTY.

A NEW EDITION.

L O N D O N:

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MEDITATIONS

A N D

PRAYERS

F O R

SICK PERSONS.

MEDITATION I.

UPON SICKNESS IN GENERAL, THE AUTHOR,
CAUSES, AND END OF IT.

I. **C**OME, my Soul, and let us reason
together concerning the Things
that have befallen us. This Body
to which thou art united, flags and droops:
the Vigour of it is abated, its Beauty withered
and wasted; the well-knit Limbs are grown
feeble,

feeble, and with great Difficulty sustain their Weight, or obey thy Commands. They scarce perform any Offices aright; and when they do, it is with Pantings and Tremblings, with Weariness and Faintness. They seem to groan and sink under their Burden; and each Member, which was formerly wont to serve thee with wonderful Chearfulness and Activity, now calls for Succours from abroad, and is no longer able to support itself. This is such a Change, as ought not to be felt only, but well considered too. *Be not thou therefore like to Horse and Mule, which have no Understanding,* Psal. xxxii. 10. but lose all Impressions as soon as the Sense of the Stroke ceases. It is thy Privilege and Duty both to reflect and ruminate; to call back Things already past, and anticipate those which are to come; and as for such as are actually present, to acquaint thyself with the Causes and Reasons, the Ends and Uses of them, as well as with the Nature and Quality of the Things themselves. All these are Operations proper to a reasoning Soul, and the present Occasion calls upon thee for the Exercise of them all. For thou canst not be Sick, as becomes a Man and a Christian, without inquiring whence and wherefore it is that thou art so. The first and most necessary Step, both toward the patient enduring of the Anguish and the successful

cessful Application of the Remedies, is to learn the true Original of our Disease.

II. Know therefore most assuredly, that what the Holy Ghost hath spoken concerning Affliction in general, is in an especial manner true concerning this particular Branch of it. *It cometh not forth out of the Dust, neither doth Trouble spring out of the Ground, Job v. 6.* Ourselves indeed were taken thence, and moulded into Man. But this was not the Effect of any natural Cause; the God of Nature, by his almighty Power, commanded Earth and Ashes into this beauteous and wonderful Structure of the human Body. And He alone who created and formed it, commands it back into its native Dust again. Every Disease and Decay, whether it be the Effect of Accident or Time, whether what we usually call violent, and shortening our Days, or whether according to the Course of Nature, and the slower Declinings of Age; all are but so many Shocks, by which this fleshly Tabernacle is shaken, or moulders by Degrees; and by growing more ruinous and uninhabitable, gives the Soul Warning to seek another Dwelling. And these are all disposed by a most steady and particular Providence, and if traced up to their first Original, have a Cause as sublime as the Body itself hath. Nature indeed goes on in a smooth and settled Course;

and though the Hand that guides this Engine is far distant, and seldom observed; but even Nature itself is God's Instrument, though the Process and the long Chain of Causes be so intricate, and withal so familiar, and frequently alike, that the Events resulting from thence cease to be marvellous in our Eyes. A Cold, or a Surfeit; a weak Constitution, or a foul Blood; unwholesome Diet, and ill Hours; Neglect of Means, and Carelessness of our Health; Advice taken too late, or a Medicine improper, or out of Season; these are what we commonly charge our Indispositions and our Miscarriages upon. And thus far we may say true; but if we go no higher, we stop a great deal too soon. For it is easy to discern a Hand above, that directs and limits all these; that smites the Strong, and preserves the Tender; slays by the slightest Accidents, and recovers from the most desperate; and this in a manner most surprising, such as no human Art or Skill had any Expectation, or can give any Account of.

III. If then thou hast convinced thyself that the Finger of God is in all these Things, pursue this Thought (my Soul) a little farther, and see what a fair and wide Scene of Knowledge and heavenly Wisdom it will soon open to thee. For what is God? Is not He that very Being infinitely powerful, and wise, and just,

just, and good? Is it not He who made thee and sustains thee, the same who governs and disposes this whole World, and all the Creatures in it, after the Counsel of his own Will? He with whom the Lives of his Servants are exceeding precious? in whose Sight the Hairs of our Head are all numbered? without whose Permission not a Sparrow can fall to the Ground? and in whose Estimation the meanest of those that are made after his own Image are of infinitely more Value than many Sparrows? Remember that such is the Author of thy Disease: and this single Remembrance will lead thee to such Consequences, such holy and seasonable Reflexions, as cannot, if duly attended to, and carefully improved, but work in thee that Frame of Mind which best suits thy present Circumstances, and must needs dispose thee to reap large and lasting Advantages from them. For how canst thou consider his Power, and not dread the dire Effects of an angry, or rest secure under the Favour and Protection of a reconciled God? or how his Wisdom, and not be content with his Choosings for thee? or how his Justice, and not be more zealously concerned to seek a Pardon for those Sins, which have provoked and made thee an Object of it? or how his Goodness, and not be even thankful under thy Sufferings? For what is grievous to Flesh and Blood, is yet ordained to excellent and hea-

venly Purposes, and it is out of very Kindness that thou art thus afflicted. How canst thou think upon his Right of Creation, without Acknowledgment of his Bounty, in giving and continuing thy Being, and all the Comforts of it? or how, lastly, upon his Preference of Mankind above the rest of the Creatures here below, without observing the peculiar Prerogative which renders Men more valuable, that of a noble and reasonable Soul, which the others want, and so cherishing the Hope of Immortality, whereunto Man only, of all here below, is appointed? A Hope which assures us we shall not perish, but only be changed; and in the midst of languishing and departing Struggles, can bear up under, nay, can triumph over Agonies, and Death itself. Here then will I fix my Thoughts; I will come before the Almighty with a Song, and make my Prayer unto the God of my Life.

H Y M N.

GOD is the Lord, even God alone: He killeth, and he maketh alive, he woundeth, and he healeth, *Deut.* xxxii. 39. *1 Sam.* ii. 6.

Thou, Lord, hast Power of Life and Death: thou scourgest, and shewest Mercy; thou ledest to the Gates of the Grave, and bringest up again, *Wisd.* xvi. 13. *Job* xiii. 2.

It is he that holdeth our Soul in Life: and suffereth not our Feet to slip, *Psal.* lxvi. 8.

And again, when we are minished and brought low through Sicknes, through any Affliction or Sorrow; *Psal.* cvii. 39, 40.

Though he suffer us to be evil treated; yet helpeth he the Meek out of Misery, or maketh all his Bed in his Sicknes, *Psal.* xli. 3.

For it is neither Herb, nor mollifying Plaister, that restoreth Men to Health: but thy Word, O Lord, which healeth all Things, *Wisd.* xvi. 12.

My Time is always in thy Hand; unto God the Lord belong the Issues of Life and Death, *Psal.* xxxi. 17. and lxviii. 20.

All Creatures wait upon thee; when thou openest thy Hand they are filled with Good.

When thou sendest forth thy Spirit they are created; when thou hidest thy Face, they are troubled; when thou takest away their Breath, they die, and are turned again to their Dust.

I will sing to the Lord as long as I live: I will praise my God while I have my Being.

My Meditation of him shall be sweet: and my Joy shall be in the Lord, *Psal.* civ. 27, 28, 29, 30, 33, 34.

When thou saidst, Seek ye my Face: my Heart said unto me, Thy Face, Lord, will I seek.

O hide not thou thy Face from me: nor cast away thy Servant in Displeasure.

Thou hast been my Helper : leave me not,
neither forsake me, O God of my Salvation,
Psal. xxvii. 8, 9, 10.

Some put their Trust in Strength of Nature,
and some in Medicines ; but I will remember
the Name of the Lord my God, *Psal. xx. 7.*

O put not your Trust (in Physicians, nor) in
any Child of Man, for there is no Help in them.

But blessed is he that hath the God of Ja-
cob for his Help : and whose Hope is in the
Lord his God, *Psal. cxlvi. 2, 4.*

Save, Lord, and hear me, O King of Hea-
ven, when I call upon thee, *Psal. xx. 9.*

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, &c.
As it was in the Beginning; &c.

P R A Y E R.

O Almighty God, the Father of the Spi-
rits of all Flesh, whose never-failing
Providence ordereth all Things both in Hea-
ven and Earth ; I desire, with the profound-
est Humility and Reverence, to prostrate both
Soul and Body before thee, begging that thou
wouldst give me Grace to behold and admire
thy Doings in all thy Dispensations towards
myself and all Mankind. I acknowledge it
thy Bounty that I ever was at all, and adore
thy Mercy and Long-suffering for preserving
me thus long in the Land of the Living. My
many Days and Years of Health and Comfort
were

were thy Gift, and the Recoveries from former Sicknesſes, as well as the Prevention of thoſe Dangers and Diſeaſes I never felt, are owing to thee alone. Man doth not live by Bread and Care, nor is relieved by Medicines only, but by the Word and Bleſſing which proceedeth out of the Mouth of God. Grant me, I beſeech thee, a ſtrong and due Senſe of my entire Dependence upon thee, and Grace to improve under, and behave myſelf in Conformity to that Perſuaſion. That whether the Means uſed for my Eaſe and Relief ſucceed, I may aſcribe all the Glory and Thanks to thee alone: Or whether thou thinkeſt fit to deny them their intended Effects, I may humble myſelf under thy mighty Hand, and remember that thou, Lord, haſt done it. Inſpire me, I beſeech thee, with that true and heavenly Wiſdom, which may help me to diſcern aright the Reaſons, and enable me to answer the Ends of this Correction, and all other thy Dealings with me. That I may hear the Rod, and who hath appointed it; and in all Conditions ſubmit myſelf entirely to thy good Pleaſure, and glorify God in the Day of Viſitation. So ſhall this Weakneſs of my Body tend to the ſtrengthening of my Virtues and the Health of my Soul, through the Merits of Him who redeemed them both at the Price of his own Blood, even thy Son, and my ever bleſſed Saviour, Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. Amen.

MEDITATION II.

OF THE POWER OF GOD, AND THE AFFECTIONS ARISING FROM THENCE, VIZ. DREAD OF HIS ANGER, AND TRUST ON HIS PROTECTION.

I. **W**HICH way soever we turn our Eyes ten thousand Objects meet us, which all prove and preach to us the almighty Power of God. The glorious Fabric of the Universe, and every Thing contained therein, nay even the meanest, and, in human Esteem, most despicable Creature, proclaims aloud the Omnipotence of its Maker. And the good Order in which these are continued, does as much magnify his preserving, as their Existence does his creating Power. But Man needs not look abroad, himself is ten thousand Arguments to demonstrate this to himself; the curious Structure of his Body, the Excellencies of its divine Inhabitant the Soul, and the marvellous amazing Union and mutual Correspondence of both these, could be the Workmanship of nothing less than Omnipotence. This Mixture of Spirit and Matter, of perishing and immortal; the Sagacity of the one to influence and govern, the Readiness of the other to obey and be actuated; the Sprightliness and Vigour, or else the Heaviness and Disorder, and reciprocal Disabilities which

which each of these convey to the other, are most certainly the Lord's doing, and ought to be marvellous in our Eyes. Alas! how should Man subsist one Moment, even in the State of his greatest Perfection, did not this great Artificer watch over his own Work, and constantly sustain it? Did not he check and moderate that Conflict, which the warring Elements of our Body are continually engaging in? But especially, now that the Corruption of our Nature, and the Transgression of our first Parent, hath let Death and Diseases loose upon us, there needs no fresh Infliction. For if God be but passive, and withdraw his Restraint, the Enemy is always ready to devour us, and we carry the Seeds of our Torment and Ruin about our own Persons. And God hath so decreed, that every Man shall once fall by the Stroke of Death. A Decree, which in our greatest Strength, in the very Bloom and Beauty of Youth, contrary to our own Expectations, or the Fears of our tenderest Friends, he sometimes executes; to teach us that our Being is wholly precarious; that we have nothing stable here, no Title even to Life itself; but are all concluded by a Sentence already passed. For all our Days are in the Nature of a Reprieve, the prolonging whereof is an Act of mere Mercy, as the cutting it short is free from the least Shadow of Injustice. God then cannot want Means

and Opportunities for this. All Nature is his; the Malice of the wicked Man, the Spite of our Foes, the mistaken Kindness of our Friends, the Errors of our Physicians, and the Misapplication of their Medicines, are all directed and over-ruled to this End. The Humours of our Bodies, the Temper of the Air, and every Element indeed, when he gives the Word, turn Executioners; or in truth, if he but please to permit, the Thing will do itself. He burns us up by Fevers, or drowns us in Dropsies; strikes us dead in a Moment by Apoplexies; buries us alive by Palsies, or wastes us by slow and imperceptible Degrees with lingering Consumptions. Thou seest, my Soul, how easily God can do these Things, by a thousand Instances, of Friends and Acquaintance gone before thee, and by thy own yet more sensible Experience, in this worn and languishing Body of thine. Thou feelest now that no Flesh is able to stand before God, and how quickly we are blasted by the Breath of his Displeasure. That to him alone belongs Power and Strength, and to poor mortal Man nothing but Wretchedness, and Weakness, and Vanity.

II. Surely (my Soul) had these Impressions been fresh and deep upon me heretofore, they would have checked my wild Career in Sin, and prevented many grievous and bold Transgressions,

gressions, which I have reason to fear might provoke the divine Majesty to cast me upon this Bed of languishing. For do we provoke the Lord to Jealousy? Are we stronger than he? Alas! my own Condition hath taught me how vain and fool-hardy it is, not only to fight against God, but not to fear and stand in perpetual Awe of him: How fatal to play with this consuming Fire: And I cannot but wish, from the Bottom of my Soul, that I had better considered this Point long ago. For he is a terrible and a mighty God; and when he enters into Controversy with Mankind, no Flesh can abide it. At least, my Soul, let us make that good use of this Reflection now, to be unfeignedly sorry for what is past; and more cautious and observant for the Time to come. The Flower is withered indeed, and hangs its feeble Head; but it is not quite cut down. O let us yet humble ourselves in his Fear, and consider what a yet more dreadful Vengeance God hath in store for hardened and unpersuadable Wretches. If the Decays and Pains of the Body alone are so grievous, how shall we bear the Loss of Body and Soul both? How shall we dwell with everlasting Burnings? If the Rod of God, these comparatively light Punishments, represent to us the Terrors of his angry Justice; who can bear the Approach of that dismal Day, when he shall come in Thunder and Flames to make an absolute End
of

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of

of this whole World, and deliver wicked Sinners over to irrecoverable Destruction? An Eternity of Torments! Jesus defend us! who can entertain even the most distant Thought of it without Trembling and Astonishment? Fall down then, my Soul, and humble thyself under the mighty Hand of God, that thou mayest not perish with this frail Body. Lose no Time in making thy Peace, but work with all thy Might, especially now that the Day of Life seems to decline, and the Night comes on, wherein no Man can work.

III. For remember, my Soul, for thy Encouragement, that if thou *abound in the Work of the Lord, thy Labour shall not be in vain in the Lord*, 1 Cor. xv. 58. He is no less mighty to save than to destroy; with him no Work is impossible; and if he will, he can even yet raise this feeble Body, and restore it to perfect Health and Soundness. Nay, he will certainly do it, if that be best for me; and if it be not, he will do yet more. For there will come a Day in which this vile earthly Part shall be enlivened again; and if it crumble into Dust, and scatter in the mean while; though it pass through infinite different Forms, yet will he pursue this Body through all its Changes, collect its dispersed Particles, command the little Heaps of Dust to awake, and translate it into a glorious and a spiritual Body;

1 Cor.

1 Cor. xv. a Body fit for a State of Incorruption, and the Inheritance of that Kingdom, where this Flesh and Blood, which we now set so false, so extravagant a Value upon, is not worthy to enter. I will therefore confirm myself in the Power and Promises of my God, and with holy *Job, though he slay me, yet will I trust in him*, Job xiii. 15. For even then I will lay me down, in hope of a Resurrection to eternal Life, and commit my Body, like Seed, to the Ground, not to be lost, but improved, by corrupting there. For thou, O God, art unchangeable, and thy Promises without Repentance; and promised thou hast, that *our vile Body shall be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious Body, according to the mighty working, whereby thou art able to subdue all Things to thyself*, Phil. iii. 21.

E J A C U L A T I O N S.

IN thee therefore, O Lord, will I put my Trust: let me never be put to Confusion, but deliver me in thy Righteousness and save me.

Be thou my Strong-hold, whereunto I may alway resort: thou hast promised to help me, for thou art my House of Defence, and my Castle.

Deliver me, O my God, from the Adversary's Hand: preserve me from the Hunter of Souls.

He

He layeth Snares, and is mighty to destroy; but yet the Lord, who dwelleth on high, mightier.

Thou, O Lord God, art the Thing that I long for: thou hast been my Hope even from my Youth.

Through thee have I been holden up ever since I was born: thou art he that took me out of my Mother's Womb: my Praise shall be always of thee.

O cast me not away in the Time of my Distress: forsake me not when my Strength faileth me.

Let them be confounded and perish that are against my Soul: let the wicked Spirits be covered with Shame and Dishonour, that seek to do me Evil, *Psal. lxxi.*

As for me, I will patiently tarry the Lord's Leisure: and I will put my Trust in the Lord, *Psal. xxvii. 16.*

For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the last Day upon the Earth.

And though after my Skin Worms destroy this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see God:

Whom I shall see for myself; and mine Eyes shall behold, and not another. *Job xix. 25, 26, 27.*

For he is the Resurrection and the Life: and whosoever believeth in him, though he die, yet shall he live again, *John xi. 25.*

Glory

Glory be to the Father, &c.
As it was in the Beginning, &c.

P R A Y E R.

O Most glorious Lord God, terrible in thy Judgments, and wonderful in all thy Dealings towards the Children of Men; possess my Soul, I beseech thee, with awful and becoming Apprehensions of thy Majesty; give me a serious Sense and Sorrow for ever having hardened my Heart from thy Fear, and provoked that Vengeance, which can consume me in a Moment. Lord, convince me whom I ought to dread, and let me never for the gratifying any sinful Inclinations, forget any more the Lord my Maker, and incur the Displeasure of him, who is able to cast both Body and Soul into Hell. And as I implore thy Grace, that this Consideration of thy Power may be an effectual Check to all my unruly Appetites; so, I beseech thee, let it be my Stay and Confidence in all Dangers and Distresses. That, forsaking the broken Reeds of all worldly Succours, I may put my whole Trust in thy Mercy, and evermore serving thee in Holiness and Pureness of Living, may even in Death itself be more than Conqueror: Even in that joyful Day, when all Enemies shall be destroyed; when thy Children shall come forth from the dark Prisons of the Grave,

Grave, and shine like Suns in the Kingdom of thee their Father. Grant this, thou Rock of my Soul, for thy dear Son Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

M E D I T A T I O N III.

OF THE JUSTICE OF GOD, AND THE PENITENTIAL SORROW RESULTING FROM IT.

I. **G**OD is a Being infinitely perfect and good, the supreme, the original Good, the Author and Maker of all Things, and cannot therefore be supposed either to hate what himself hath made, or to have given Being to any thing with a Design to render it miserable. His Providence and Power, which made the Subject of the two former Meditations, are in their own Nature and primitive Intention, calculated for the Benefit and Security of his Creatures. And if at any time they become the Instruments or Dispensers of Grief and Pain, this is an Effect purely accidental, an Operation so foreign, that it is even extorted from them, and wholly imputable to some other Cause. And this is the Case of Mankind, once favoured above all their Fellow-Creatures, and safe under the Shelter and Smiles of an Almighty Protector; but by their own Fault deprived of this Defence, left
naked,

naked, and exposed to Mischiefs and Sufferings; and not only disarmed of their surest Guard, but in perpetual Danger of being destroyed by that very Hand which was formerly their Friend and Defender. O wretched Consequences of Sin! that did not only render our first Parents, and all their Posterity, liable to bodily Death, and all the Diseases and Pains that lead to it, but left a fatal Averfeness to all Good, and a strong Propension in us to all Evil. By indulging whereof we add our own actual Guilt, to that which our sinful Parents had derived down to us, and by Iniquities without number, by wilful, repeated, habitual and bold Transgressions, do confirm and aggravate this Sentence of Death, and arm the Justice of God against ourselves.

II. Wonder not then if thou see so many dreadful Spectacles of Affliction in the World, nor murmur when thou thyself art bound in the same Fetters, and sore laden with the Burden of Adversity. But remember that God is righteous, and thou and these People are wicked; that he is holy and just as well as good; and though he doth not willingly grieve the Children of Men, yet their Iniquities put a sort of Violence upon him, which he cannot resist. They quite weary him out, and render it impossible (that is inconsistent with his other Attributes, and the Perfection of

of his Nature) to let such Men go always unpunished. Nay, even in those infinitely more dreadful Torments of another World, his Perfections are concerned to vindicate themselves; for though these be terrible above what we are able to express or conceive, yet are they just. And at the same time that we may be apt to question, whether so great Severity be consistent with the Character of our Judge, we prove the Wisdom of our Lawgiver, and that even eternal Pains were necessary, since even all this will not contain us in our Duty, and effectually restrain us from sinning.

III. And this, my Soul, is thy Case. These everlasting Plagues are the deserved Wages of thy Wickedness. For do but descend into thyself (as it becomes thee to do now more especially) and there take an exact Survey of thy Miseries and Frailties, thy raging Passions, and ungoverned Appetites; ask thyself what Abuses and Misemployments of Health thou hast been guilty of; Whether thou hast not neglected and forgot God and Heaven too much, and been too full of Care and Fondness for this present World? Whether thou hast not omitted his Worship and Sacrament, and disregarded his Word; or whether these have not been frequented formally and coolly?—Examine the Heaviness of thy Affections, the Wanderings and Negligence of thy Mind in

public

ays un- public and private Devotions. [*Here it may*
 y more be convenient to instance in any other Particulars
 his Per- against our Duty to God.] See again the Vio-
 nselfes- lation of Justice and Charity to thy Neighbour,
 we are whether thou hast faithfully discharged the
 ey just. Offices of the several Capacities and Relations
 apt to God hath placed thee in ; [*a Husband or Wife,*
 e con- a Master or Mistress, a Son or Daughter, a Ma-
 ge, we- gistrate, a Subject, a Parent, a Brother or Sis-
 and that- ter and the like.] If thou hast not been guilty
 e even of gross and palpable Injustice in thy Dealings,
 y, - and yet hast thou done Wrong to no Man's Soul, by
 ill Advice or ill Example ? nor to the Bodies
 of any by Malice or Contempt, by ill Treat-
 These ment, severe Usage, want of Compassion and
 ges of Care for their Infirmities ? What Reputations
 o thy- hast thou injured by Scandal and Censure, by
 espe- false and uncharitable Judgments, by busy
 f thy meddling with Matters that concern thee not ;
 tions, by officiously spreading, or too hastily believ-
 what ing ill Reports ; by encouraging, repeating,
 thou and being pleased with detracting or severe
 t not Reflections ? Or if by none of these, yet at
 n too least by neglecting to reprove or to discounte-
 dness nance a slanderous Tongue, and to deliver the
 hast Innocent from its secret Stabs ? [*Here again be*
 and particular in any other Sins you have been guilty
 have of against your Neighbour.] Turn thy Eyes in-
 ?— ward once more, and behold the Breaches of
 the that Duty thou owest to thyself ; the Intem-
 d in perance and Irregularity of thy Desires ; the
 blic Murmur-

Murmurings and Discontents; the Infirmities indulged; the Passions unsubdued; the Negligence in thy greatest Concern; the Love unlawful, and the Abuse of lawful Diversions and Delights. These are Things so incident to our State, that no Man's Conscience can speak Peace to him in them all; and happy art thou in those, where thine condemns thee not. But know withal, that *God is greater than thy Heart, and knoweth all things*, 1 John iii. 20. He keeps exact Account of thy lurking Corruptions, and secret Faults; the unobserved, or the long since forgotten Misdemeanors of thy Life; the black Catalogue whereof, could they be set before thee, would give a dismal Prospect, full of Horror and Confusion, and intolerable Amazement. So that thou must of Necessity acknowledge thyself a Mass of Filth and Misery; a Wretch that, if God should enter into Judgment with thee, hast Reason to expect nothing better than Indignation and Fury; to be set up as a Mark of his Vengeance, and by some swift exemplary Destruction, swept violently away into the hottest Flames of Hell.

IV. Thus much I am sadly sensible of, and do stand condemned out of my own Mouth. And thus far the Circumstances of all Mankind are the same; that if God *should be extreme to mark what is done amiss*, the very best of us all

could

could not abide it, Psalm cxxx. 3, 4. But, blessed be God though Matters are deplorable, they are not quite desperate; for there is Mercy with him, and his Justice is satisfied. The Price and Purchase of our Souls is paid; our forfeit Lives are ransomed and redeemed; our Ransom in value exceeds the whole World; even his own beloved and only begotten Son; who spared not his own Life, but willingly poured out his Soul to the Death; and is thereby become a Sacrifice and Atonement for the Sins of wretched Mortals. He hath published glad Tidings of Reconciliation and Repentance, of Pardon and Peace. He came to save Sinners, even the chief of Sinners. Our God willeth not the Death of any, provided they believe, and sincerely obey him; not according to the Shekel of the Sanctuary, which requires unsinning Perfection, but after the Standard of the new Covenant, which allows for human Frailties, accepts Sorrow for the past, Amendment for the Time to come, a fervent Love of God, and honest Endeavours to serve him. This is a Saying worthy to be accepted indeed; this is the Comfort and Confidence of poor returning Sinners. And while I can see by Faith the Penalty of eternal Damnation released, by Virtue of the Blood of this Lamb of God, slain to take away the Sins of the World, I will submit with Patience to the temporal Punishments inflicted

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by my provoked God ; and thankfully accept
the Sicknesſes and Afflictions of this preſent
Life, as ſo many Warnings and Calls to Re-
pentance.

V. And ſure, my Soul, we ſhall take care
to make this good Uſe of them. For theſe
are the Diſcipline of the Lord ; and if after
that is come upon me for my evil Deeds, and
for my great Treaſpaſſes, ſeeing that thou, O
God, haſt puniſhed me leſs than my Iniquities
deſerve, if I ſhould again break thy Com-
mandments, thou wouldeſt certainly be an-
gry, till thou haſt utterly conſumed me
Ezra ix. 13. and torment me ſo much the
more, for neglecting ſo great Salvation :
take therefore this Chaiſement with all poſ-
ſible Submission, and do with unfeigned Sor-
row confeſs my manifold Offences. I implore
thy Mercy, who art juſtly diſpleaſed with me
and ſince in the Miſt of Life we are in Death,
I cry earneſtly to thee for Succour ; and beg
that howſoever thou thinkeſt fit to diſpoſe of
this corruptible Body, thou wouldeſt look
graciouſly upon me in thy dear Son, and not
deliver my poor Soul into the bitter Pangs of
eternal Death ; but pity and ſave me for Chriſt
Jeſus his ſake. *Amen.*

*Here may be repeated the thirty-eighth, and
fifty-fiſt-Pſalms.*

The

Then the Confession in the Communion Service.

Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all Things, &c.

Or else the three Prayers at the End of the Communion.

O Lord, we beseech thee, &c.

O most mighty God, &c.

Turn thou me, O good Lord, &c.

After either of which say as follows :

P R A Y E R.

(Visitation of the Sick.)

O Most merciful God, who according to the Multitude of thy Mercies dost so put away the Sins of those who truly repent, that thou rememberest them no more; Grant me, I beseech thee, true Repentance and thy holy Spirit: and then open thine Eye of Mercy upon my languishing Condition, and give me the Comfort of Pardon and Forgiveness. Renew in me, most loving Father, whatsoever hath been decayed by the Fraud and Malice of the Devil, or by my own carnal Will and Frailness. Preserve and continue me in the Unity of thy Church; guard me by thy Power from all the Assaults of the Tempter, and suffer him not to take Advantage of my

Weakness. Consider, I beseech thee, Contrition, accept my Tears, hear my Prayers, and those of others on my Behalf, and assuage my Pains, as shall seem to thee most expedient for me. In thy Mercy, Lord, I put my full Trust; in thy Mercy alone, and in the Merits and Sufferings of my crucified Saviour. Impute not, O Lord, unto me my former Sins, but strengthen me with thy blessed Spirit, and whenever thou art pleased to take me hence, take me unto thy Favour, through the Mercies of thy dear beloved Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

MEDITATION IV.

Of the Wisdom and Goodness of God.

I. **W**ERE there no other Consideration to compose the Mind, but that alone of our Sufferings being just, this should reason persuade Meekness and Patience, and Contentedness under them. For as the Prophet urges very well; *Wherefore doth a mortal Man complain; even a Man for the Punishment of his Sins?* Lam. iii. The Thief upon the Cross, notwithstanding all the hardening of his former profligate Life, yet pacified himself

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thee, under his Pains, and reprov'd his reviling
 my o Companion with this Reflection, that they
 ny Beha were under that *Condemnation justly, and re-*
 n to th *ceived but the due Reward of their evil Deeds,*
 Mercy, *Luke xxiii. 41.* But we have yet abundantly
 ny Mer more to quiet our repining Thoughts, and
 gs of m silence all Complaints, when the Sharpness of
 ord, un an Affliction, or the Sufferings of a sick Bed
 me w would provoke us to Impatience. Our Sins
 thou a have been many and great enough to make
 unto t God our Enemy, and do cry but too loud
 y dear for the utmost Rigours of his Vengeance; yet
 Amen. are not these Adversities the Wounds and
 Bruises of an Enemy, but the Chastisements
 of a Father. One that smites us indeed, but
 it is in Righteousness and Friendship, and only
 with a Design to reprove and reform us. Ob-
 serve what heavenly Comforts the Apostle
 hath left behind, and how God himself hath
 explained the Nature and Intent of his own
 Dispensations. *My Son, despise not thou the*
Chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art
rebuked of him. For whom the Lord loveth he
chasteneth, and scourgeth every Son whom he re-
ceiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth
with you as with Sons: for what Son is he whom
the Father chasteneth not? Furthermore, we
have had Fathers of our Flesh which corrected
us, and we gave them Reverence; shall we not
much rather be in Subjection to the Father of
Spirits, and live? For they verily for a few

Days chastened us after their own Pleasure, but be for our Profit, that we might be Partakers of his Holiness. Now no Chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable Fruits of Righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby. Heb. xii.

II. What now can more illustrate the Wisdom of Providence, than the converting our bitterest Calamities into Occasions of our Virtue and Happiness? and which of all our Calamities is more likely to contribute to our Reformation than those of Sickness and Pain? for these, by touching our own Persons, are most sensible and grievous to be borne, and by punishing the Body, for the Sake and Service of which, most, if not all our Wickednesses are committed, they meet with the very Cause, and go to the Root of the Disease, and so are best fitted to perfect the Cure. Our Physician of Souls is both skilful and kind, he will not give us over out of a cruel Indulgence to our own Ease. Our Father answers his Character, and gives seasonable Correction to prevent our utter Undoing. But in all this there is the Prudence of the Physician mixed with the Tenderneſs of the Parent. The one would not prescribe the bitter Cup, unless he knew it necessary and best for us; and if our Circumstances call for Correction, it is with Gentle-

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Gentleness and Reluctancy, with Pain and yearning of Bowels, that the other scourges.

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III. Do thou therefore, O my Soul, consider who chuses for thee, and learn to resign thyself to his Disposals; for they are the Appointments of one who is wiser than thou, and who loves thee better than the tenderest Mother could. Do thou likewise consider why he thus chuses for thee, and learn to improve under the seeming Harshness of such Dispensations. Take gladly the wholesome Physick, and secure a good Operation to thyself. Have no Desires or Wishes of thy own, but with a constant Reserve to the good Pleasure of God, think and be assured that what he does is best; best in itself, and best for thee too, if thy own Fault obstruct it not. Alas! we know not what to pray for as we ought, and should therefore beg nothing positively, but that God would do what he sees most expedient. Ask therefore, my Soul, that he would make thee an Instrument of his own Glory; that he would support thee in these Trials, and not suffer thee to be tempted above that thou art able; that he would command all Things to work together for thy good; and for the rest, take thy Saviour for thy Pattern, and as often as thou prayest that the Cup may pass from thee, be sure forget not to add from the very

Bottom of thy Soul, Nevertheless, O Father, not my Will, but thine be done.

IV. And to render the Cup thou art now drinking as little unpalatable as may be, forget not also to sustain thyself with the Comforts even of thy weakest Condition. Seriously observe how gracious the Lord is, how he hath not only spared when thou hast deserved Punishment, but in the very Midst of his Wrath hath thought upon Mercy. If thy Pains be not perpetual, thank him for thy Intervals of Ease and Refreshment; if they be not acute and extreme, thank him for the Abatement and Moderation of them. If thou canst recruit thy feeble Spirits with Sleep, thank him for closing up thy Eyes in gentle, reviving Slumbers; if he hold thy Eyes waking, thank him for the Opportunities of meditating and praying to him in the Night-Season; yea, thank him especially for continuing to thee thy Understanding and thy Senses; and that he hath given thee the Power and the Grace to make a good and holy Use of these; that the Length of thy Sickness hath been so much a larger Opportunity of preparing for that important Change, which, not this languishing Body of thine only, but also all those that thou leavest behind in full Health, and Beauty, and Vigour, must shortly undergo. If thou endurest much, consider this is
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a good Method of weaning thy Affections from the World, and making thee thirst and pant more earnestly after the lasting Joys of a better Place. If the tedious lingering Distemper assault, and almost weary out thy Patience, think how much rather this is to be chosen than the raging Frenzies of a Fever, or the sudden Stroke of an Apoplexy. Reflect upon the Condition of those Wretches who are snatched out of the World, it may be in an Act of damning Sin, but however in an Instant, without so much as the Power or the Leisure to seek Pardon or Peace, to commit their Souls to God, or so much as once implore his Mercy at the last Gasps. O! what would they have given, how much more would they gladly have endured, to purchase this long Warning, these slow and solemn Approaches of Death, the happy Advantages thou now enjoyest of trimming thy Lamp, and putting thy Soul in Readiness to meet the Bridegroom at his coming! For though we ought indeed to expect him every Hour, even in our most confirmed Health; yet well it is for that Servant who receives express Notice of his Master's Approach, and takes care so to provide for it, as in zealous Prayers and eager Wishes to go out and meet him; and having on the Wedding-Garment, waits only for his last Call, to enter with him to the Marriage.

EJACULATIONS.

WHY art thou so heavy, O my Soul,
why art thou so disquieted within me?

Still put thy Trust in God, for I will yet
give him Thanks, who is the Help of my
Countenance, and my God, *Psal.* xliii. 5, 6.

The Lord hath chastened and corrected me,
but he hath not given me over unto Destruction,
Psal. xviii. 18.

I know, O Lord, that thy Judgments are
right; and that thou of very Faithfulness hast
caused me to be troubled, *Psal.* cxix. 75.

It is of the Lord's Mercies that I was not
long ago consumed: because his Compassions
fail not.

The Lord is my Portion, saith my Soul:
therefore will I hope in him.

It is good for a Man that he should constantly
hope, and quietly wait the Salvation of
the Lord: for the Lord will not cast off for
ever.

But though he cause Grief, yet will he have
Compassion, according to the Multitude of his
Mercies. Yea, like as a Father pitieth his
own Children, even so is the Lord merciful
unto them that fear him. *Lam.* iii. 22, 24, 26,
31, 32. *Psal.* ciii. 13.

In the Multitude of the Sorrows which I have in my Heart, thy Comforts have refreshed my Soul, *Psal.* xciv. 19.

For I know that with thee there is Mercy; and with my God is plenteous Redemption. *Psal.* cxxx. 7.

O remember not my old Sins, but have Mercy upon me, and that soon, for I am come to great Misery. *Psal.* lxxix. 8.

Heal my Soul, which hath sinned against thee: and then let the Lord do what seemeth him good, *Psal.* xli. 4. *1 Sam.* iii. 18.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, &c.
As it was in the Beginning, &c.

P R A Y E R.

HEAR me, Almighty and most merciful God and Saviour, extend thy accustomed Goodness to me thy poor Servant, now cast upon this Bed of Languishing, and grieved with Sicknefs. Sanctify, I beseech thee, this thy Fatherly Correction to me, and grant that I may receive it with all the Patience and Submission of a dutiful Child. I desire to acknowledge and adore thy Divine Wisdom and Goodness, in every Dispensation of Providence towards me; and only beg, that thou wouldst keep me safe under all, and then use what Methods thou pleasest, of
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bringing me to thyself. Manifest thy Strength in my Weakness. Make even my feeble Condition an Instrument of thy Glory; and, the more my outward Man decayeth, strengthen me, I beseech thee, so much the more continually, with thy Grace and holy Spirit in the inner Man. Let the Sense of my Weakness add Strength to my Faith, and Seriousness to my Repentance. That if it be thy good Pleasure to restore me to my former Health, I may lead the Residue of my Life in thy Fear, and to thy Glory; or else grant me so to take thy Visitation, that, after this painful Life ended, I may dwell with thee in Life everlasting. For this, O Lord, is the chief, the most earnest Desire of my Soul: that whether I live, I may live unto the Lord; or whether I die, I may die unto the Lord; so that living and dying I may be thine, through Jesus Christ, my dear and only Saviour. *Amen.*

MEDITATION V.

Upon Recovery from Sicknes.

I. **I**F Dangers and Distresses awaken our Consideration, the Deliverance from them ought not to pass unobserved. The
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Judgments of God extort Complaints from us; and shall his Mercies be received in Silence? When he afflicts and wounds, we seek him early; and shall we forget him when he refreshes and heals us? That sure were most unworthy, most reproachful. The rather so, because we are able to give ourselves a very plain and rational Account, how it comes to pass that we receive Evil at the Hand of God; but the Good he vouchsafes us, furnishes just Matter no less of Wonder than of Thankfulness. Death is the Punishment of Sin; the Diseases and Decays of our Bodies are so many Degrees of, and Advances toward that Death: and our Consciences can find no Difficulty in justifying these painful Dispensations. For none of us can descend into his own Breast, without discovering infinite personal Offences, which might provoke God to take this forfeit Life, and to cut us off in the Midst of our Days. But, when he forbears to do so, when he checks his Wrath, and suspends the Execution of that fatal Sentence gone out against us; we can discern no Reason for this in ourselves, but must resolve it all into the sole, the undeserved Goodness of our compassionate and long-suffering Lord.

And such, my Soul, is now thy Case. Thou wert hastening apace to the Regions of the Dead, and in Fear that thou shouldest be deprived

prived of the Residue of thy Years. But when thou wast almost *cut off with pining Sickness, and thine Eyes even failed with looking upward*; when thou *reckonedst each Night and Morning*, that there would be *an End of thee* upon Earth; then did the Lord stand by thee and *save thee*, even because *he had a Favour unto thee*, Isa. xxxviii. 12, 13. Psal. xviii. 19.

II. Now, though this be the Condition common to all Mankind, that we contribute no Part of the efficient or meritorious Cause of such Goodness; yet in the final Cause we may and must bear a very considerable Part. We could not give the Blessing to ourselves: We could not deserve that Almighty God should give it us: But it will lie upon us to take care, that such Grace be not bestowed in vain. In one respect indeed, and strictly speaking, neither this, nor any other of the Dispensations of Providence can possibly be in vain. For some Effect they will of Necessity have, even with regard to us. But, if they do not answer the good Purposes for which they were designed, better were it for us that we had never received them at all. The lengthening out our Days, if we do not amend our Manners, is but the ministering fresh and larger Opportunities of adding yet more to our Sins here, and to our Torments hereafter. And happier had it been, to have
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for SICK PERSONS.

been swept away with a swift Destruction, than to be delivered from our Fears, and live such a Life afterwards, as is certain to render us more miserable in the End. For every Mercy, every Escape, must be accounted for; and those which are entertained unthankfully, will at length prove Curses, instead of Blessings to us. It will therefore become thee, my Soul, very seriously to consider wherein true Thankfulness consists, and what are the Instances by which it must be expressed.

III. When Men do any signal Acts of Kindness to each other, the Receiver esteems himself obliged to pay them back again, in some Service or Benefit as good. This is what Men cannot be excused from, provided fit Opportunities offer, and their Circumstances enable them to do it. But when the Power of doing this is wanting, we are sensible, that so much as falls short in procuring a Friend's real Advantage, ought to be made up in all becoming Testimonies of Respect. In such a Readiness of Mind as plainly shews, that the Party does not however want the Will and hearty Desire of returning such Favours in kind, and to the full.

Now the same Rule of Equity must needs hold toward our great Benefactor in Heaven. He is indeed so great, that his All-sufficiency
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can neither need, nor receive any Addition. And we are so very poor and impotent, that it were the Extremity of Vanity and Madnes, to imagine ourselves capable of adding to him. The utmost we can do, is to demean ourselves so, that he, and all the World, may plainly perceive us duly sensible of his Bounty. Now this can be demonstrated only by our constant and zealous Care to please and honour him, by taking Delight in the Obedience he hath enjoined us, and testifying by our Practice that we esteem the Service of so liberal a Master, our most reasonable Duty and perfect Freedom. Although therefore our Lips ought to set forth the Praises of the Lord, and his Kindness should ever be in our Mouths: yet are those Praises never set forth effectually, yet is that Kindness never acknowledged as it ought, except our Lives and every Action publish it. The Professions of Gratitude are of no Consideration in any Case, farther than they express the inward Sentiments of the Heart. That Heart cannot be truly grateful, which does not labour and study, by all proper Means, to approve itself to the Person whose Debtor it is. And how this is to be done to almighty God, his own Word hath informed us, by declaring, that the Man who truly *honours* him will *order his Conversation aright*, Psal. 1. 23. That they who *love* him, will give Testimony of their

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their Affection by keeping his Commandments, John xiv. 15. That the Goodness and Forbearance of God does, both in its natural and designed Tendency, lead to Repentance, Rom. ii. 4. That it even constrains Men to live no longer to themselves, but to him who hath done so great Things for them, 2 Cor. v. 15.

IV. These are Reflections so self-evident, so very obvious and natural to every Man, that seldom are any remarkable Calamities undergone, or Deliverances obtained, without exciting them in our Minds. Few Wretches are so hardened in Wickedness, few so abandoned, and lost to all Sense of God and Goodness, but in the Seasons of Sickness and Danger, they see their past Follies with Displeasure, and discern the Reasonableness of forsaking them. But this is the general Unhappiness, this is the great Fault of most Men, that such Remorse quickly wears off, and their good Intentions cool again. The Smart of the Rod ceases, and the Success of the Correction is lost with it. The Health of the Body grows more confirmed, and the Conscience hardens, in proportion to the Constitution. And thus the Man returns to his old Vanities and Vices with the same Unconcernedness as before.

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But, O my Soul, let it not be thus with Me—No. Let me look back with great Seriousness upon the Vows I made when I was in Trouble, and consider, that these were not to be transient and occasional Resolutions; that they were intended for lasting Obligations, and cannot be sincerely discharged, unless they influence the Remainder of that Life, so graciously restored to me. I ought to look upon myself as one raised from the Dead, and favoured with Life a second Time, that from henceforth I might employ and use the Gift to the Honour of the Giver, who hath thus, as it were, created me afresh. He saw it better, upon my Request, to continue me longer in this State of Trial; and I ought to give the more earnest Heed, that every Day, added to my past Years, may prove a higher Advance in Piety and Virtue; that none of my holy Purposes languish or die, as too many have formerly done; that this late Approach to the Grave may perpetually warn me of my Mortality; and that whenever Death and Judgment shall actually overtake me, as overtake me they most certainly will, I may not be found less provided to meet my Lord, than this last Summons left me.

For can I reflect upon my late Weakness, and harbour an Imagination so vain, as that
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this Body, in its greatest Vigour, may promise itself an everlasting Continuance? Can I observe this Youth of mine renewed as the Eagle's, and attribute it to any other Cause, than the Almighty Power, and infinite Goodness of Him, who wounds and heals, who kills and makes alive, after the Counsel of his own Will? Can I acknowledge my present Recovery owing entirely to that Power and Goodness, and not discover the indispensable Engagements which lie upon me to make some suitable Return? And what Return is possible, what so proper, so acceptable, as that of a Thankful Heart; a diligent Improvement of this Mercy; a Life, in every Part of it, entirely dedicated to Him, who hath strengthened his Title now yet more, and made it upon so many Accounts his own?

V. I will therefore be frequently acting over again those solemn Exercises of Repentance, performed in the Bitterness of my Soul; and by the Repetition shew, that the good Thoughts I entertained, continue to be the calm and settled Sense of my more composed Mind. I will strictly examine what Fault is committed, what Duties neglected, or but slightly performed; what Abuses, or what Failures in a right improvement of Health heretofore, might probably have provoked God to cast me upon the Bed of Sicknes, and
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reduce me to such Extremity of Suffering. I will thank the Lord for giving me Warning by this Affliction; but especially for touching and softening my Heart, and inspiring me with godly Sorrow and holy Purposes. And, to my own Endeavours, I will add my most fervent Prayers, that the Continuance of his Grace may, out of this painful Chastisement, produce the peaceable and blessed Fruits of Righteousness and faithful Perseverance. To this End I will not fail frequently to renew my good Resolutions; to cherish and keep up in my Soul all heavenly Dispositions, by constant private Prayer and serious Reflection; by attending duly upon the Publick Worship; by reading and hearing, and conscientiously applying God's holy Word to my present Circumstances and Necessities; by letting slip none of the precious Opportunities for strengthening my Faith and other Christian Virtues, in the Sacrament of my dear Redeemer's Body and Blood. I will take heed to all my Ways, be upon my Guard against all Temptations and Occasions of sinning, moderate in my most lawful Pleasures and Enjoyments, and diligent in all the Duties, which the several Relations wherein I stand, and the State of Life to which I am appointed by Providence, require of me. *I will set a Watch before my Mouth, and keep the Door of my Lips, that I offend not with my Tongue, Psalm cxli. 3. xxxix. 1.*

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I will take Heed that I hurt not any Man, by Thought, Word, or Deed; but will extend my Charity, as I am able, to all Mankind. To the poor distressed Members of my blessed Saviour, by such Succours as their Condition stands in need of, and mine qualifies me to give: To others by my good Advice, and seasonable Instruction: To all, by my Prayers and good Wishes, and the powerful Motives of a pious Example: And even to my Enemies, by Meekness and Forgiveness; even as God, for Christ's Sake, hath had Compassion on me. I will make it my Business to become every Day more in love with Religion, and to make all with whom I converse so; that I may in some Measure give a Check to the Abominations of this degenerate Age in which I live, and adorn the Doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ, or at least save myself from this untoward Generation. In a Word, I will be sure that the Sense of God's Mercies, of this last in particular, may never depart out of my Mind; but live and grow, and bring forth Fruit, and influence me powerfully, to the very last Hour of my Life.

VI. Nor think, my Soul, that any Resolutions can be too strict, any Endeavours too much, upon this Occasion. *For after all that is come upon me for my evil Deeds, and for my great Trespases; seeing that my God hath pu-*

nished me less than my Iniquities deserve, and hath given me such a Deliverance as this; should I again break his Commandments, would he not then be angry with me till he had consumed me, so that there should be no escaping? O Lord, my God, thou art righteous; for I remain yet escaped, Ezra ix. 13, 14, 15. But let not, I beseech thee, this Mercy, by being forgotten or abused, turn to my utter and eternal Condemnation. For, that this must be the sad Consequence of such Ingratitude at last, not only thy Word hath told me, but I can plainly gather it from my own Reason and Experience. I feel what Indignation the Unkindness of Persons, whom I have particularly obliged, kindles in my Breast: I find that no Sort of Resentment is more uneasy, no Provocation harder to be borne, than that which arises from the Injuries and Affronts of those unworthy People, who presume upon my Friendship to use me ill. And can I suppose, that the just and jealous God will not call them to a severe Account, who turn his Grace into Wantonness, and, when they live by Miracles of Bounty and Long-Suffering, live so as to dishonour him, and reproach the Patience that spared them? The more signal and particular his Goodness hath been, the heavier and more insupportable, no Doubt, will be that *Wrath*, which hardened and impenitent Wretches treasure

sure up to themselves against the Day of Wrath, and Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God, Rom. ii. 5. So that our blessed Lord's Admonition to the impotent Man, is, in Effect, the Voice of Reason and every Man's own Conscience. Each Affliction, each Escape, calling out loudly to the Receiver, Sin no more, lest a worse Thing come unto thee, John v. 14.

And how indeed can it be expected, that infinitely worse should not come, when neither Severity will drive, nor Compassion and Kindness lead, to Amendment, when neither Correcting nor Sparing can do any Good? The Circumstances of those Men are dangerous, whose Distemper only is strong: But theirs must needs be desperate and mortal, whose very Remedies feed and inflame their Disease. If Pruning and Manuring be both in vain, the next Sentence upon the barren Fig-tree is, *Cut it down, why cumbereth it the Ground?* Luke xiii. The Ax is already laid to the Root, and if it be lifted up to give the fatal Stroke, the End of every Tree, *which bringeth not forth good Fruit, we are expressly told, shall be to be burnt with unquenchable Fire,* Matt. iii.

VII. These Things, and sundry others, which will be apt upon such Occasions to offer themselves, if applied well and warmly to
my

my Conscience, will have a very great and happy Force, in forming my Disposition, and regulating my Conduct for the Time to come. The Recollection of God's abundant Mercies will inflame my Breast with holy Gratitude and fervent Love; such as would keep me ever passionately desirous to pay the just Tribute of my best Services in Return, and cheerfully to run the Way of his Commandments. The Remembrance of his Judgments will possess me with an awful Fear of displeasing him, and convince me, by my own Experience, that *no Flesh can stand before him when he is angry*, Psal. lxxvi. My late Languishings and feeble Condition, will be a seasonable and lively Admonition, what this frail mortal Nature is; these will teach me to die daily to the World, as a Person who hath here *no continuing City*, but ought *to seek one to come*, Heb. xiii. 14. And if a Person must not, from even the most confirmed Health, entertain any such fond Prospects and vain Confidences of long Life, as may tempt him to presume Death and Judgment at a great Distance, and that he is secure against any Surprise from them: Much rather ought I to expect them every Moment; and both from the daily Spectacles of Mortality in my Neighbours, and the sensible Decays, or sudden Changes which happen to myself, quicken my Preparation to meet that Lord, who hath compared himself
to

to a Thief in the Night; and foretold us, that he will come in such an Hour as we think not, Matt. xxiv. 43, 44. Thus shall I, by a true Christian Prudence, extract spiritual Advantage out of temporal Evils; discern the Goodness and Wisdom of Providence, even in the most afflicting Dispensations; convert the Pains and Diseases of a vile perishing Body, into Instruments of Strength and Health to my Immortal Soul; and have a happy Occasion of acknowledging with David, that it is good for me to have been in Trouble, Psal. cxix. 71. Since by that I have learnt more diligently to practise, more stedfastly to persevere in the Statutes of my God.

H Y M N.

Praise the Lord, O my Soul: and all that is within me praise his holy Name.

Praise the Lord, O my Soul: and forget not all his Benefits. *Psal. ciii. 1, 2.*

Who can express the noble Acts of the Lord; or shew forth all his Praise! *Psal. cvi. 2.*

Which forgiveth all thy Sins: and healeth all thine Infirmities.

Which saveth thy Life from Destruction: and crowneth thee with Mercy and loving Kindness.

C

Which

Which fatisfieth thy Mouth with good Things; making thee young and lusty as an Eagle. *Psal.* ciii. 3, 4, 5.

For his Arrows stuck fast in me: and his Hand pressed me fore.

There was no Health in my Flesh, because of his Displeasure, neither was there any Rest in my Bones, by reason of my Sin. *Psalms* xxxviii. 2, 3.

My Soul abhorred all manner of Meat: and I was even hard at Death's Door. *Psalms* cvii. 18.

Then cried I unto thee, O Lord: and gat me to my Lord right humbly; *Psalms* xxx. 8.

I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of mine Age: as for thy Years, they endure throughout all Generations. *Psalms* cii. 24.

But what Profit is there in my Blood, when I go down to the Pit? *Psalms* xxx. 9.

Hear my Prayer then, O Lord, and with thine Ears consider my Calling: hold not thy Peace at my Tears.

O spare me a little, that I may recover my Strength, before I go hence and be no more seen. *Psalms* xxxix. 13, 15.

So when I cried unto the Lord in my Trouble; he delivered me out of my Distress.

He sent his Word and healed me: and I was saved from Destruction. *Psalms* cvii. 19, 20.

O!

O! what great Troubles and Adversities
hast thou shewed me, and yet didst thou turn
and quicken me: Yea, and broughtest me
from the Deep of the Earth again. *Psalms*
lxxxix. 18, 20.

Therefore will I praise thee and thy Faith-
fulness, O God: I will offer unto my God
Thanksgiving, and pay my Vows unto the
most Highest. *Psalms* l. 14.

For the Grave cannot praise thee; Death
cannot celebrate thee: They that go down to
the Pit cannot declare thy Truth.

But the Living, the Living, he shall praise
thee, as I do this Day: the Fathers to the
Children shall make known the Goodness of
the Lord. *Isaiah* xxxviii. 18, 19.

And they that know thy Name will put
their Trust in thee: for thou, Lord, hast ne-
ver failed them that seek thee. *Psalms* ix. 10.

As for me, I will give great Thanks unto
the Lord with my Mouth: and praise him
among the Multitude. *Psalms* cix. 29.

O come hither, and hearken, all ye that
fear God; and I will tell ye what he hath
done for my Soul: *Psalms* lxvi. 14.

I was in Misery, and like unto him that is
at the point to die; but he delivered me out
of all my Fear. *Psalms* lxxxviii. 15. xxxix. 4.

If the Lord had not helped me, it had not
failed but my Soul had been put to silence.

But when I said, my Foot hath slipped;
thy Mercy, O Lord, held me up. *Psal. xciv.*
17, 18.

Thou hast turned my Heaviness into Joy:
thou hast put off my Sackcloth, and girded
me with Gladness. *Psal. xxx. 11.*

The Lord is my Strength and my Shield,
my Heart hath trusted in him, and I am de-
livered: therefore my Heart danceth for Joy,
and in my Song will I praise him. *Psal. xxvii. 8.*

O how plentiful is thy Goodness, which
thou hast laid up for them that love thee: and
that thou hast prepared for them that put their
Trust in thee, even before the Sons of Men.
Psal. xxxi. 21.

O ye that love the Lord, see that ye hate
the Thing which is Evil: the Lord preserveth
the Souls of the Faithful, he delivereth them
from the Hand of the Wicked One. *Psal. xcvi. 10.*

His Mercy and Truth shall follow me all
the Days of my Life: and I will dwell in the
House of the Lord for ever. *Psal. xxiii. 6.*

I will keep the Ways of the Lord: and will
not forsake my God as the Wicked doth.

For I have an Eye unto all his Laws, and
will not cast out his Commandments from me.
Psal. xviii. 21, 22.

Praised be the Lord, who hath not cast out
my

my Prayer, nor turned his Mercy from me.
Psalms lxvi. 18.

Yea, blessed be the Lord God, even the
God of Israel: which only doth wondrous
Things.

And blessed be the Name of his Majesty for
ever: and let all the Earth be filled with his
Majesty. *Amen. Amen.* *Psalms* lxxxii. 18, 19.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and
to the Holy Ghost.

As it was in the Beginning, is now, and
ever shall be, World without End. *Amen.*

*After this Hymn, the Reader may enlarge his
Meditations to the same Purpose, by repeating
the Thirtieth, Seventy-first, Seventy-seventh,
Hundred and sixteenth, and the Hundred and
eighteenth Psalms.*

P R A Y E R.

O Most mighty God, and Merciful Father,
wonderful in thy Doings, and gracious
in all thy Dispensations toward the Children
of Men: I, thy unworthy Servant, prostrate
myself before thee, with all the fervent Af-
fections of a grateful Breast; acknowledging
it thy Goodness, that I was not long ago con-
sumed.

sumed. Thou, Lord, hast chastened and corrected me, but thou hast not given me over unto Death. Blessed therefore be that divine Wisdom, which saw this late Affliction seasonable, and would not suffer me to perish in my Folly, for want of such necessary Warning. Blessed be that tender Compassion, which in the midst of Wrath remembered Mercy, which made all my Bed in my Sickness, which passed by my Impatience and many Infirmities, and inclined a willing Ear to the wandering and discomposed Supplications of a poor, feeble Wretch, when he cried unto thee in his extreme Anguish and Distress. Blessed be the powerful Influences of that Grace, which disposed my Heart to Consideration and Repentance. But above all, blessed for ever be that Power and Goodness, which, by sparing me, when I deserved to be utterly cut off, hath given me Opportunity to make good those holy Resolutions, which thy Grace inspired when I was in Trouble. Lord, let this Goodness of thine, and my own serious Purposes of Amendment, never slip out of my Mind; but preserve in me a constant tender Sense of the indispensable Obligations I lie under to better Obedience. Make me every Day more and more zealous in promoting thy Glory, and the Good of my Brethren; as a Person saved from Destruction for this very
End,

End, that the Remainder of my Life should be employed in the Service of my gracious Deliverer. In this Sense, O God, I humbly offer and present unto thee this Soul and Body, rescued from Hell and the Grave; beseeching thee to keep them thine for ever. O let not the Return of my Health produce a Relapse into my former Sins, but become an Instrument of thy greater Honour, of my own stricter and more stedfast Virtue here, and my more exquisite Happiness hereafter. O, that the Talents of Time and Ability to do Good, which have been heretofore so wretchedly neglected, may, now they are afresh committed to my Trust, be, for the Time to come, so faithfully improved, that the shining Graces of an exemplary Conversation may hold some Proportion with the Blessings I have been so particularly favoured withal. Let these excite, not me only, but others also by my Example, to love thee more fervently, to serve thee more chearfully, to trust in thee more assuredly. In thee, O Lord, who *shewest us thy Goodness so plenteously*, and *daily pourest thy Benefits upon us*: In thee, who *never failest nor forsakest them that seek thee*: In thee, whose *Mercies are sweet*, whose *Loving-kindness is better than Life itself*, whose *Service is perfect Freedom*, and in keeping whose *Commandments there is exceeding great Reward*. Psalm lxviii. 19. ix. 10. lxvii. 4. xix. 11.

To this End, sanctify, I beseech thee, all the Methods of thy Providence to the Salvation of my immortal Soul; and especially, let not thy abused Mercies ever rise up in Judgment against me. O, may my past Sufferings work in me great Humility and godly Fear; that from them I may confirm myself in Faith and Patience, and an entire Resignation to thy Will, and wiser Choices for me. Bring back frequently to my Remembrance the Promises and Supplications poured out in the Bitterness of my Soul; that those successful Addresses to the Throne of Grace may stir me up effectually, to the paying what I then so solemnly vowed. *Open thou my Lips, O Lord, that my Mouth may declare thy Mercy and Truth as long as I live, and praise my God while I have any Being,* Psalm civ. 33. And forasmuch as my Recovery is only the lengthening out a little that Span of Life which must shortly have an End; suffer me not, I pray thee, to forget, that I am a Stranger upon Earth; but help me so to disengage my Heart from these Things here below, which my own late Experience hath taught me cannot profit in the Day of Wrath; that my Hopes and Affections may be unalterably fixed upon those better and eternal Treasures, which thou hast prepared for them that love thee. Let the Thoughts and cer-
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rain Expectation of Death and Judgment be so constantly, so powerfully present to my Soul, that in what Hour soever my Lord shall come, I may be found ready to meet him, and to go in with him to the Marriage. Even so, blessed Jesus, grant me in such manner to pass through Things Temporal, that I finally lose not the Things Eternal; but that I may use and improve thy Grace here, till Grace at last be swallowed up in Glory, and I translated to my Master's Joy. All which I beg for thy own Merits sake, my only Mediator and Redeemer: To whom, with the Father and Holy Spirit, be ascribed, as is most due from me and every Creature, all Honour and Glory, Dominion and Power, Thanksgiving and Praise, and humble Adoration, henceforth and for evermore. *Amen.*

MEDITATION VI.

Of D. E. A. T. H.

It is appointed for all Men once to die, and after that the Judgement, Heb. ix. 27. So says the Spirit of God himself; and what is thus appointed, none can reverse, none can escape. That then, which remains for Us,

who lie under this Sentence, to do, is only to endeavour, that we may die as becomes Men and Christians; that is, as Persons who expect to render an Account of the Things done in this Body, and to receive a Recompence accordingly, whether it be Good or Bad, *2 Cor. v. 10.* But who may abide that Day? or who shall stand when the Lord appeareth? Who indeed; when not only the Thing itself, but the very Apprehensions, and especially the Approaches of it, are so dreadful? For what is more terrible to mortal Man than dying? and what more so to sinful Man, than being judged? But yet, my Soul, since these must unavoidably come, let us see what Course can be taken to soften a little and reconcile us to them; nay, let us try if it be not possible not only to bear them contentedly, but even to meet them gladly.

II. If Death be considered in itself, it is no more than what all the living Creation here below undergo in common with ourselves. And what is dying? it is a ceasing to live after the Manner we now do; it is a Removal, or rather an Escape from a World of Misfortunes and Miseries, of Sorrow and Disquiet, of Malice and Deceit, of Noise and Contention, of Pains and Anguish, of Crosses and Disappointments, of Vanity and Vexation; and, which is worst of all, of Temp-

Temptation and Sin. It is doing that once for all, which we have done in part a thousand times already, by Sicknefs and Faintings, by the Decays and Infirmities of Nature, and by the Loss of tenderest Relations, who tore away our very Heart with them. In short, the present Life, even to the Prosperous, will be found upon a just Computation to have made a very unequal Distribution; for even such have a larger Portion of Trouble than of Happiness. But to the Generality of Mankind it is a rough, tempestuous Sea, and Death is the making of their Port, or at least retiring into the Shelter of a Creek, where Storms can reach and annoy them no more. These are not affected Strains of Philosophy, but weighed and measured Truths, such as every Man is, or may be sadly convinced of at his own Expence. The only Deceit arises from our natural Fondness for living, which God hath wisely infused and woven into our Souls, that we might sustain our present Calamities the better. As, on the other Hand, he hath made Faith of a future State our Virtue, and ordained the Miseries of the present Life as an Exercise for that Virtue, that both together might be a Balance at least against the Objects of Sense, draw off our Affections from a Place which was never intended for our Rest, and raise our Desires up to those

better Things provided for us in another World. And surely if this Matter were well weighed, however timorous Nature may start and boggle at first, yet it would be no hard matter to come close up to Death, and by the Help of familiar Practice, and prudent, pious Meditations, to render not only the Thoughts of it, but even the Thing itself, very tolerable to us.

III. But if we consider Death in another Capacity, as leading and keeping us close Prisoners to a just and terrible Judgement; thus it hath a Sting indeed, which is the Sense of Guilt and Sin unpardoned; that is what nothing can relieve, but the Comforts arising from true Repentance, from a Saviour sacrificed to expiate, and make full Satisfaction for our Offences, from a Title to our Part in that Expiation, and the Favour of a reconciled God; and these, I hope, are Comforts which belong to me: For do but hear and observe, my Soul, what reviving Words the Holy Spirit hath spoken to this Purpose; *If any Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous; and he is the Propitiation for our Sins,* 1 John ii. 1, 2. Christ hath died, who is he that condemneth? Yea, Christ is risen again, and seated at the right Hand of God, a perpetual Intercessor, and a mighty Saviour to all

all them that come to God by him, *Rom. viii.* He hath told thee, that what the Infirmary of the Law and the Flesh could not do, Christ hath done for us, *Heb. ii. and iv.* that he knows and hath felt our Weaknesses, and will not fail to make large and very gracious Allowances for them; that Jesus hath washed us in his own Blood; and *though our Sins be as Scarlet*, yet upon our true Repentance *they shall be white as Snow*, *Rev. i. 5. Isa. i. 18.* Look up then, and see thy Lord coming in the Clouds: Thou must be judged, it is true, but thy Redeemer shall be thy Judge; and to whose Decision wouldst thou chuse to stand, but to thy best Friend's? to Him, who loved thee so dearly as to die for thee, to be made Sin and a Curse for thee, that thou mightest be made the Righteousness of God in him? This is thy sure Confidence; and Heaven and Earth may pass away, but his Merits and Promises can never fail; and he has promised, that all who repent and believe, and serve and love him, shall be saved in that Day, and be where he is, to behold his Glory, *John xvii.* nay, not to behold only, but to enjoy it; to live and reign with the Son of God himself: For such he hath made Sons also, *Heirs of God, and Joins-heirs with Christ*, (*Rom viii. 17.*) of an *Inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved for them in the Heavens,*

1 Pet. i. 4. and if I know that I love God, *I know that I shall be with him, and be like him, and see him as he is,* 1 John iii. 2.

IV. O Glorious Day, which shall bring me to the full and inseparable Enjoyment of my dearest Saviour and most merciful God, when this Veil of Flesh shall be done away, and spiritual Joy, and Peace, and Knowledge, and Love, shall for ever abound! Blessed be thy Name, O God, who hast opened an Entrance into such Bliss for poor returning Sinners! Blessed be thy Bounty, who hast ordained such an infinite Recompence for our imperfect and unworthy Labours! And if thou hast decreed withal that I must pass through the Regions of Darkness and Death to come at those Seats of Light and Glory, shall I grudge this Passage? When I have borne the Heat and Burden of the Day, shall I mourn because Even is come, and shrink back when I am called to receive my Wages? Some Difficulties I know there are, but thou, O Lord, wilt strengthen my Faith, and not suffer me to faint under the Terrors and Struggles of my last Trial. Give me Grace, I pray thee, to consider, that this is the Method by which thy own Son was made perfect; that it is no more, nay, it is much less than he suffered voluntarily, and for my Sake; that by suffering

ing Death he hath overcome it, and rendered the Conflict more easy to them that come after. Grant me to rejoice, at least to support myself, with the nearer Prospect of an eternal Rest and Reward.

V. And do thou, O my Soul, labour continually to strengthen thy own Frailties and Fears with holy Meditations, with the repeated Exercises of Faith and Repentance, of Trust and Love, and Heavenly-mindedness. Bid adieu to this vain World, and shake Hands with it chearfully. As for all that is uneasy here, thank God for a Deliverance from it; and for all whom thou hast reason to love and be concerned for; remember that thou leavest them under the Conduct of the same good Providence, of which thyself hast had so large Experience. Consider, that God is all Relations, and more than all to those that want them; and if they continue to seek and serve him diligently, he will never forsake them, but be their God and their Guide unto Death. Bid all my Friends weep, not for me, but for themselves, who are still in a State of Danger and Temptation, of Vanity and Misery, from which they that die in the Lord are for ever freed. Tell them we shall see one another again shortly. And as I am going now to those dear and good Souls who have got the
Start

Start of me in this Journey, so they, and I, and all God's Children, shall have a glorious, a joyful Meeting at the Resurrection of the Just. We shall all go together into a Place whence Tears and Mourning are for ever banished, where the Vision of God, the Service of the Lamb, the Company of Angels and Saints, shall minister eternal Matter of Praise and Joy; and our Happiness will exceed all we can conceive, all we can hope for. And now, *O Death, where is thy Sting! O Grave, where is thy Victory! Thanks be to God, who hath given us the Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. xv. 55.* Therefore, my Soul, be thou *stedfast, immoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord*, forasmuch as I am assured that my *Labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.*

EJACULATIONS.

WHILE I am at Home in the Body, I am absent from the Lord; for I walk by Faith, not by Sight; therefore I am confident, and willing rather to be absent from the Body, and to be present with the Lord. *2 Cor. v. 6, 7, 8.*

Lord, whom have I in Heaven but thee? and there is none upon Earth that I desire in Comparison of thee.

My

My Flesh and my Heart faileth, but God is still my Strength, and my Life, and my Portion for ever. *Psal. lxxiii. 25, 26.*

Fearfulness and Trembling are come upon me, and an horrible Dread hath overwhelmed me. *Psal. lv. 5.*

For the Enemy of Souls crieth out aloud, and the Ungodly One cometh on so fast, he is minded to do me some Mischief; so maliciously is he set against me. But I am thine, O save me; I am bought with a Price, O Jesus, even with thy most precious Blood. I am one of thy Sheep: rebuke this ravening Wolf; for thou art greater than he, and none is able to pluck me out of thy Hand.

Thou that takest away the Sins of the World, have Mercy upon me. Thou that takest away the Sins of the World, receive my Prayer. Thou that fittest at the right Hand of God, have Mercy upon me. [*Communion Service.*]

Thou, Lord, art full of Compassion and Mercy, Long-suffering, and of great Goodness; O deal not with me after my Sins, nor reward me according to my Iniquities.

Thou knowest whereof we are made, and rememberest that we are but Dust: Look graciously therefore upon my Weakness; pity the Interruptions and Imperfections of my Prayers: pardon what I cannot now do with a steady

steady and composed Zeal, and accept the Sincerity of my Heart. *Psal. ciii. 8, 10, 14.*

Thou knowest, Lord, the Secrets of my Soul; shut not thy merciful Ears to my Prayers; but spare me, Lord most holy, O God most mighty, O holy and merciful Saviour, thou most worthy Judge eternal; suffer me not at my last Hour for any Pains of Death to fall from thee. [*Burial Service.*]

Faithful is he that hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee: Lord, grant me the Knowledge and sensible Experience of this most gracious Promise. Stand by me, and save me from the Reproof of him that would eat me up. Deliver my Soul from the roaring Lion, who goeth about continually seeking whom he may devour. *Heb. xiii. Psal. lvii. 1 Pet. iv.*

Lord, I commit my Soul unto thee, as into the Hands of a faithful Creator, and most merciful Redeemer. Spare it, O God, and let it be thine in the Day when thou makest up thy Jewels. In the Hour of Death, and in the Day of Judgement, good Lord, deliver me. *1 Pet. v. 8. Mal. iii. [Litany.]*

P R A Y E R.

O Almighty God, Father of Mercies, and God of all Comfort, I flee unto thee for Succour

Succour in this my great Extremity; most humbly beseeching thee to support and strengthen me in the last Conflict of my Life. Deliver me from the Snares and Terrors of the Wicked One; sustain my Agonies with the peaceful Comforts of a quiet and good Conscience, and of perfect Reconciliation with thee, my God. Lord, as thou bringest me nearer to thyself, so let my Love and my Desires of thee be stronger. And, O that it may please thee, in thy abundant Mercy, to afford me some sweet Foretaste of future Bliss, that I may triumph even in Death itself; but if in this I know not what I ask, yet at least suffer not my Faith to be shaken, nor thy Loving-kindness to fail; and however thou dealest with this corruptible Body, let my Soul, I implore thee, be precious in thy Sight. Wash it in the Blood of the immaculate Lamb of God, that all its Pollutions being purged and done away, it may be presented pure and without Spot before thee, and be received into thy everlasting Kingdom, through the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ thy only Son, our Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

Short Ejaculations for the last Extremities.

I Believe, blessed Jesus, that thou shalt come to be my Judge; I therefore pray thee,
help

help thy Servant whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious Blood.

O make me now to be numbered with thy Saints in Glory everlasting. [*Te Deum.*]

The Snares of Death compass me round about, and its Pains get hold upon me. Haste thee, O God, to deliver me; make haste, O Lord, to help me. *Psal.* cxvi. and lxx.

Thy Kingdom come, O God; thy Will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven.

Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit.

Come, Lord Jesus; come quickly.

These last may be used by the Friends and Standers-by, with the necessary Alteration of the Person, after the sick Party is disabled from the Use of them.

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